

VZCZCXRO0076
OO RUEHDBU RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHNP RUEHSL RUEHSR
DE RUEHROV #0078/01 1771637
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O P 261637Z JUN 09
FM AMEMBASSY VATICAN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1125
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUEHKK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 0019
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA PRIORITY 0036
RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY 0030
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA PRIORITY 0014
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY 0007
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 0022
RUEHML/AMEMBASSY MANILA PRIORITY 0012
RUEHLU/AMEMBASSY LUANDA PRIORITY 0001
RUEHYD/AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE PRIORITY 0001
RUEHROV/AMEMBASSY VATICAN 1163

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 VATICAN 000078

SIPDIS

FOR THE PRESIDENT FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES

EO 12958 DECL: 6/26/2019

TAGS PREL, PGOV, VT

SUBJECT: HOLY SEE: SCENESETTER FOR THE PRESIDENT'S JULY 10 VISIT

REF: A. A) VATICAN 72 B. B) VATICAN 63 C. C) VATICAN 59 D. D) VATICAN 52 E. E) VATICAN 38

VATICAN 00000078 001.2 OF 005

CLASSIFIED BY: Julieta Valls Noyes, CDA, EXEC, State. REASON: 1.4 (b), (d) Mr. President, it's an honor to welcome you and your family to the V

Summary

1. (C/NF) Holy See officials also are pleased you are visiting. Your meeting with Pope Benedict XVI will be an opportunity to discuss our shar

Context for Your Visit

2. (C/NF) The Vatican is second only to the United States in the number of countries with which it enjoys diplomatic relations (188 and 177 re

3. (C/NF) The Holy See in many ways welcomed your election, as demonstrated by the Pope's immediate letter of congratulation. Vatican official

Pope Benedict XVI

4. (C/NF) The Pope has had a rocky year, having confronted controversies about Catholic-Jewish relations and his views on AIDS prevention, and
VATICAN 00000078 002.2 OF 005

respect as well from non-Catholics, the Pope wields an unparalleled moral megaphone. He uses it carefully, speaking publicly in generic, neutra

Bioethical Issues

5. (C/NF) The Catholic Church teaches that abortion is wrong. Vatican officials grudgingly accept that abortion is legal in the U.S., but oppo

6. (C/NF) The Vatican opposes embryonic stem cell research on the grounds that it leads to the destruction of human embryos. It has no objecti

Financial Crisis, the Poor, and Immigration

7. (C/NF) The Vatican has been very vocal about protecting the world's most vulnerable people from harm caused by the global financial crisis.

Food Security

8. (C/NF) Similarly, the Vatican is very worried about declining nutrition in the poorest countries. The Vatican has not taken a formal positi

Environmental Issues

VATICAN 00000078 003.2 OF 005

9. (C/NF) The Pope speaks frequently about the importance of caring for God's creation. Vatican City is the world's first carbon-neutral state

Arms Reduction

10. (C/NF) The Vatican welcomed your call to eliminate nuclear weapons, and has long advocated arms reductions and non-proliferation. The Holy

Inter-faith Understanding

11. (C/NF) The Vatican praised your Cairo speech, especially the sections on religious freedom and diversity, the Israeli-Palestinian situatic

Middle East Peace Process

12. (C/NF) Peace in the "Holy Land" is one of the Vatican's top priorities, and was one of the central themes of the Pope's May visit to Israe
VATICAN 00000078 004.2 OF 005

inter-faith dialogue and protection of Christian minorities. His messages largely mirror the U.S. approach to the region. This provides opportu

Iraq and Christians

13. (C/NF) The Holy See publicly opposed U.S. intervention in Iraq. Once fighting began, however, the Vatican focus shifted to securing peace

Africa

14. (C/NF) The Pope travelled to Africa in March. He grabbed headlines with an interview he gave en route saying that the use of condoms contri

Cuba

15. (C/NF) The Church is the only major institution in Cuba that is independent from the government. The Vatican hopes for a transition to den

Turkey EU Accession

16. (C/NF) As Cardinal Ratzinger, the Pope had expressed uneasiness about the notion Turkish accession to the EU. The Holy See's position now
VATICAN 00000078 005.2 OF 005

criteria - including full protection of human rights and religious freedoms.

Iran

17. (C/NF) The Holy See is deeply concerned about the recent violence and ongoing human rights violations in Iran. It has been publicly silent